

Register of Deeds

Organization: 160050

	2011/12 Actual	2012/13 Current	2013/14 Requested	2013/14 Approved	Percent Change
Revenues					
Real Estate Excise	\$402,099	\$360,000	\$400,000	\$400,000	11%
Charges & Fees	542,832	494,800	571,300	571,300	15%
Miscellaneous	152,456	197,000	208,000	208,000	6%
General Fund	(390,217)	(377,083)	(485,702)	(490,853)	30%
Total	\$707,170	\$674,717	\$693,598	\$688,447	2%
Expenses					
Personal Services	\$532,078	\$505,667	\$511,583	\$513,932	2%
Supplies & Operations	175,092	169,050	182,015	174,515	3%
Capital	0	0	0	0	0%
Total	\$707,170	\$674,717	\$693,598	\$688,447	2%
Employees					
Permanent	11.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	0%
Hourly	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%
Total	11.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	0%

Budget Highlights

The Register of Deeds recommended budget for Fiscal Year 2013/14 is \$688,447, a two percent increase over the current year. The major drivers of the budget increase are two revenues, Real Estate Excise Tax and Recording of Legal Instruments. The Register of Deeds' revenue is projected to increase by \$179,000 an 18 percent increase from current year. This signals a slight increase in real estate activity within Catawba County. Additionally, the budget will increase to support operational expenses and planned compensation and mandated retirement increases.

Ten percent of the total revenues collected for marriage licenses, recording of legal instruments, Uniform Commercial Code filing fees, and miscellaneous revenues are recorded in the Register of Deeds Automation and Preservation Fund. The remaining 90 percent stays in the General Fund. This was effective January 1, 2002, when House Bill 1-73 was approved by the General Assembly.

Performance Measurement

Fiscal Year 2013/14

In Fiscal Year 2013/14, Register of Deeds will continue to focus on providing timely, courteous and accurate services to the public by recording 99 percent of the vital records received within one day. The office will also strive to improve customer service by engaging in a robust indexing/scanning effort that will increase the public's access to birth, death, and marriage records via the internet. The third area that Register of Deeds' outcomes center on is

minimizing the loss of all records in the event of a disaster. The department plans to update its Disaster Recovery Plan and conduct quarterly drills not only to minimize loss but also to maximize the department's ability to retrieve all records during a disaster.

Fiscal Year 2012/13

At mid-year the Register of Deeds was on target to achieve two of three outcomes. The lone outcome not on target was: Improve customer service to the public by reducing the amount of in office research time required to obtain copies of needed records. The department's efforts to index and scan uncertified delayed birth and marriage records have been postponed in order to correct improper documentation on nearly a decade of birth and death records. All other portions of this outcome are on target.

The Register of Deeds continued to provide courteous and accurate services to the public by recording 100 percent of real estate documents and 99 percent of vital records on the day received. Likewise, the department responded to 99 percent of vital records requests within the same day. The Register of Deeds has also sought to minimize the likelihood of losing records and maximize the ability to retrieve records in the event of a disaster by backing up digitalized real estate records, updating the Disaster Recovery Plan, and conducting quarterly drills.

Fiscal Year 2011/12

The Register of Deeds achieved 100 percent (6 of 6) of its Fiscal Year 2011/12 outcomes. Last fiscal year the Register of Deeds provided timely, courteous, and accurate services by recording 100 percent of real estate documents and 99 percent of vital records on the same day; returning real estate documents within three days after being indexed; and educating couples on North Carolina marriage license requirements. Customer service improved with the implementation of techniques that reduced the department's in-office research time. For example, taxpayers can access data such as scanned images of real estate plats online. Staff stayed abreast of the laws and regulations that govern the office by attending relevant conferences and workshops. The department ensured an indexing error rate of less than one percent by using a blind double-key indexing method for all recorded documents. Register of Deeds minimized the risk of loss and maximized the ability to retrieve all records, by backing up digitized public records (e.g. real estate records, vital records, military discharge, etc.) with either Catawba County's Information Technology Department, Archives in Raleigh, or an outside vendor and by ensuring that a Disaster Recovery Plan was intact and operational.

REGISTER OF DEEDS

Statement of Purpose

The Catawba County Register of Deeds serves as custodian of all records of real estate, vital records, military discharges, and the certification of notary publics. It is essential in preserving Catawba County's history.

The Register of Deeds is a customer-driven recording agency that provides numerous functions to the legal community and the general public, such as supplying accurate and expedient documentation as needed. The Register of Deeds is an elected official of four year terms who is legally charged with recording and maintaining the integrity, completeness, accuracy and safekeeping of Catawba County's public records.

The department's highest priority is to provide six services required by North Carolina General Statutes. The six required services are recording legal documents, issuing marriage licenses/certificates, issuing birth and death certificates, issuing notary public oaths/authentications, imaging recorded documents and maps, and indexing recorded documents and maps.

The office is bound by North Carolina General Statutes to make recorded documents available via a temporary or permanent index within 24 hours; documents must be fully indexed on the permanent index within 30 days of the initial recording. At the same time, the indexing unit strives for a margin of error of less than one percent.

Outcomes

1. To provide timely, courteous, and accurate services to the public, the Register of Deeds will:
 - a. Record 100 percent of real estate documents the same day received.
 - b. Record 99 percent of vital records the same day received, given there are no problems with the records.
 - c. Respond to 99 percent of all vital records requests (marriage license, birth, and death certificates) received by mail and in person within the same day, given there are not problems with the request.
 - d. Return 100 percent of real estate documents within three days after indexing is complete.
 - e. Educate 100 percent of couples on North Carolina's marriage license requirements.
 - f. Ensure an indexing error rate of less than one percent for all recorded documents.

2. Improve customer service to the public by reducing the in office research time needed to obtain copies of records by implementing the following technologies by June 30, 2014:
 - a. Same day indexing and recordings which consist of working with Catawba County Public Health and funeral homes.
 - b. Providing the indexing and scanned uncertified copies of delayed birth records for Volumes 18 – 17 for the self-service in-house terminals, which contain various dates of births, but these records would have been filed from April 8, 1975, to current (last record March 12, 2009).
 - c. Providing the indexing and scanned uncertified copies of death records back to 1940 on the self-service in-house terminals. (Filings from 1950 to the present are already available.)
 - d. Providing the indexing and scanned uncertified copies of marriage records back to 1940 on the self-service in-house terminals. (Filings from 1950 to the present are already available.)
 - e. Providing offline access for staff only to scanned images of the Military Discharge DD214 forms of Volumes 21 to current images. (Volumes 20 – 11 are already available.)
 - f. Providing offline access for staff only to indexing of the Military Discharge DD214 forms. Books 21 and 22 will be completed in Fiscal Year 2013/14. (Data for Books 19 & 20 will be available at the end of Fiscal Year 2012/13.)
 - g. Work with Information Technology to keep Website updated, user friendly, and available 24 hours per day, seven days per week.
3. Minimize loss and maximize the ability to retrieve all records in the Register of Deed's Office in the event of a disaster by ensuring a Disaster Recovery Plan is intact and operational using the following methods:
 - a. Backing up digitalized real estate records, vital records, military discharges, and notary public certifications either through the Catawba County Information Technology Department, State Archives in Raleigh, or private vendors (Logan Systems).
 - b. Updating the Disaster Recovery Plan and guaranteeing staff knows how to implement the plan.
 - c. Conducting quarterly drills for the staff to ensure awareness of the Disaster Recovery Plan and how to address any alterations needed to the plan.
 - d. Including the public in at least two of the four drills held throughout the year.